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## THE LEGEND OF THE HOLY GRAIL.

## v.

AN account has been given of the evolution of the legend in French romance. Before proceeding with an account of the forms taken by the legend outside the limits of the French language, it may be advisable to offer remarks on the manner of development of mediæval romances, and on the characteristics which ordinarily belong to the later versions of a tale as compared with earlier forms of the same story. In a literary cycle such as the Arthurian, it is first of all to be noted, that as the compositions are generally works of conscious art, so the manner adopted by the reconstructor in dealing with his material depends on his own choice, and is subject to the greatest variation. As an imitator, he may follow the data of his original with slavish precision, or, as a recaster, may use the greatest freedom in his rendering, to an extent which renders his production essentially a new work : he may expand the narration to inordinate length, or may abstract its situations, or omit certain of its episodes ; he may confine himself to the *dramatis personæ* supplied by him, or may ornament his work with a wholly new set of proper names ; he may, in short, use all the freedom which a modern dramatist may employ with regard to the treatment of a non-copyrighted theme. Furthermore, if he himself is not a cultured person, and if he is obliged to receive his suggestions at second-hand, he may exhibit all the variations and misunderstandings which naturally result from the intervention of a third mind ; or he may seize on certain floating ideas and general notions, and so construct an independent novelette, which may thus be intermediate between the character of an original flight of imagination and an adaptation of a celebrated production. Mediæval authors enjoyed the greater freedom in this respect, because books were rare ; and, unless the romancer belonged to the highest literary circles, his use of his material was not likely to be questioned, and he stood in little danger of indictment for plagiarism. The forms likely to be taken by variations are therefore infinite, and the imagination of the writer is not easily to be limited by definite rules. Nevertheless, speaking generally, some observations may be offered on the criteria characterizing later versions of a story.

(1.) The natural course likely to be taken by a narrative was gradual expansion. Beginning, perhaps, as a brief poem capable of being concluded within the time of a single recitation, it would receive rapid increment in two ways. On the one hand, the additions would be external ; prefaces would represent the *enfances* of

the hero, or would lay the basis of the tale in an earlier generation by recounting the fortunes of his parents : on the other, the brief history would be thought worthy of a sequel carrying on the activity of the main performer. As the authors contributing these extensions would usually be persons of moderate imagination, they would be apt to carry out their narrative by frequent repetition of the ideas and motives furnished by their original. Examples of such process have been shown in the continuations of the *Perceval*, elaborate fictions in which misunderstandings of an incomplete original furnished no small part of the matter. Supposing several such prefaces to exist in the case of any one work, then the critic should first of all consider whether the main situations, and especially the proper names, exhibit agreement : if so, he would infer that the various improvers had a single source no longer extant ; but if the outlines differed, he would suppose that the several authors were guided solely by their respective whims. To trifling agreements in detail, in the face of general independence, he should not attach much consequence, because such resemblances would probably be found explainable as common inferences drawn from situations in the original, which the several authors had understood, or misunderstood, in a similar manner.

(2.) The story grows also internally, by the continued interpolation of new episodes. In virtue of such increase, the tale would require to be separated into portions capable of separate recital, and in this way opportunity would be offered for rearrangement of the various episodes. So long as the narrative was unwritten, this process would proceed freely ; the record of the fiction would interpose difficulties, but not put an entire stop to this manner of evolution. If one tale be found to contain as its foundation epic material belonging to another, while including also new matter intercalated between the divisions of the story, it may be taken as certain that the former is a recast based on the latter.

(3.) The portions of a mediæval romance, as already noted, usually consist of independent episodes very loosely connected. On the part of an editor or imitator, it is natural to endeavor to bring these separate sections in closer relationship. One way of accomplishing this is by uniting the characters of the action in the ties of a common genealogy. Sometimes, in place of minor personages who are unknown or unrelated to the action, the reviser prefers to introduce characters with whom the readers or hearers are otherwise acquainted. The effort to connect, in either of these ways, one part of a story with the rest of the plot, or with the expectations of the audience, indicates a later production.

(4.) The subsequent and probably more sophisticated author,

finding the task of winning the sympathies of his audience a harder one, and under the obligation of surpassing in some way the attraction of the earlier work, commonly tries to do so by the accumulation of marvel and fantastic situations. In this cycle, at least, the progress of time is accompanied with a tendency toward wilder and wilder fiction. While the earlier poet was able to be more direct, and more in accord with the manners of his time and the realities of life, his successors become more and more romantic.

(5.) Where the reconstructor works for the people, he is strongly tempted to introduce into the action primitive elements which are already familiar to the people and likely to attract their attention. On the other hand, in his hands the psychology and human interest of the older author is likely to meet with complete shipwreck. From this relation it follows that no rule can be more incorrect than the canon of critical judgment, continually employed even by distinguished scholars, which measures the relative antiquity of two compositions according to the degree of barbarism which the plot may seem to exhibit. To use a figure which I have elsewhere employed, the pure gold of literature, falling into the baser metal of an earlier stratum of thought, ordinarily becomes an amalgam. In this case, the style and sentiment of the piece constitute a much better guide to its antiquity than do the facts of the action.

(6.) Where a work known to be of later date and in general correspondent to an earlier production contains certain independent features, the inference must be that these features result from the freely creative activity of the later author. The burden of proof lies on the critic who endeavors to prove the contrary; and in making this essay he must appeal to minds likely to be skeptical, and his failure to convince these doubters must be held to indicate the failure of the argument. In general, the existence of a celebrated work, like the appearance of a higher race of animals, has the effect of obliterating the intermediate steps by which it rose; earlier and inferior works are forgotten and pass away in the new radiance. The development, if it continues, now starts from a new centre; the lines of tradition converge toward the masterpiece, and are drawn through, as through a ring; subsequent divergences proceed from the fancy and pleasure of improvers who work on the lines of the new composition, and trust their own invention for its alteration; it is only in exceptional cases, and particularly where the material has had a long unwritten national currency, that parallel lines interweave with the process; ordinarily, it is useless to search beyond the new creation, or to expect the survival, in its variations, of any ancient remains which may throw light on the method of its production. In particular, where a generally close connection is admitted,

to assume the occasional influence of an early source is ordinarily only the self-deception of misapplied ingenuity, as the arguments by which such discovery is supported are apt to be characterized by sophistry. Broad common sense will usually pay attention to the outlines of the plot, as sufficiently indicating the relation, and lay little stress on the citation of minute variations. Learning, when employed to exhibit petty divergencies, is apt to become an organon, not for discovery, but for demonstration; with adequately minute erudition, any theory whatever can be triumphantly demonstrated.

#### TRANSLATIONS OF THE PERCEVAL OF CRESTIEN.

For two centuries the work of the trouvère continued to enjoy a European popularity; during that time, a cultivated reader in any country would have had no difficulty in obtaining access to the romance, while an outline of the situations might easily have fallen within the cognizance of unlettered persons. A Flemish rendering bears date of 1350.

The work of a Norse translator is rendered noteworthy by the freedom used in separating into two tales the two parts of the romance, relating respectively to Perceval (Parceval in the saga) and Gawain (Valver). The renderer chose to complete the former story by adding a brief preface and sequel of his own. In regard to the nature and functions of the dish or grail, he fell into complete confusion, misspelling the word, and also misinterpreting it. His error shows that a foreigner, acquainted only with Crestien's tale, would not be likely to comprehend the term.

#### THE PARZIVAL OF WOLFRAM.

An unlettered Franconian minstrel produced the most interesting of mediæval German epic poems. Wolfram of Eschenbach, who could neither read nor write, disclaimed for his work the title of book; nevertheless, his composition is essentially a product of conscious art, being indeed characterized by a style of peculiar individuality. The poet had a considerable knowledge of contemporary French literature, which he must have acquired by listening to reading aloud, while his own poetry must have been dictated in sections to an amanuensis. The task was undertaken in the early years of the thirteenth century; the character of the introductory part shows that, before giving out any portion of the work, the author had mentally elaborated the entire complicated plot.

That Wolfram could on occasion be a free romancer, and that he possessed sufficient fancy to make up a story on the base of vague suggestions, is shown by the fragments of his *Titurel*. In these the treatment is as wildly romantic as the theme; in order to recover the

jewelled leash of a hound for a lady who sets her hand as the price of the achievement, the hero sets out on a task understood to be attendant with danger. The idea may probably have been borrowed from some French story, like that of the "Mule sans frein," in which a knight is sent to a (fairy) castle in order to procure a magic bridle; but the details of the action could have had no origin save in the ready invention of the minnesinger. Into this tale Wolfram introduced many of the new proper names, obviously of his own devising, which occur in the *Parzival*, and even extended the number of such personages; the verse, therefore, was either subsequent to the more epic production, or, at all events, composed after the plan of the latter had been completed. It does not appear that the poet perfected any considerable part of his new undertaking; it is likely that his good sense perceived the inadequacy of the thin thread of dramatic movement, too slender to allow of sustained interest.

In an account of the poem of *Crestien*, it has been explained that the work consists of two portions nearly unrelated. The story of *Perceval* leaves the education complete in arms, love, and ethical insight; the hero is thus prepared for the accomplishment of his part in the action, but the incompleteness of the poem makes his future activity entirely conjectural. On the other hand, the adventures of *Gawain* break off in the midst of an undecided quarrel, leaving the knight still under the obligation of performing a series of tasks, concerning which conjecture cannot offer the least ray of light. Even after the accomplishment of these duties, it would still be necessary for the poet to interweave the strands of his narration, and unite the interests of the two heroes in a single scheme; respecting the nature of this intent, no contemporary had the least inkling. Wolfram was familiar with the tale of *Crestien*, but either did not know, or else preferred to ignore, the task of the continuators; he was therefore left to finish the history in his own manner, and proceeded to cut the Gordian knot in a very summary fashion. The proposed combat he ended by a reconciliation; the remaining duties of *Gawain* he altogether overlooked, and went on directly to the task of combining the sections of the narrative, and bringing the two chief actors into relation. For this purpose he had recourse to an expedient borrowed from another poem of *Crestien* (that relating to *Yvain*); *Gawain* is made to meet his friend *Parzival* without recognition, and to fight with him an undecided battle, terminated by discovery. In Wolfram's mind, *Parzival* has not yet accomplished sufficient to pass for a hero of the Grail; he has indeed proved himself the peer of the best knight of Christendom, but heathenesse remains (just as we find contemporary French romancers disposed to introduce into the Grail legend the heathen

world). For the purpose, Wolfram can hit on nothing better than to repeat the idea of an accidental encounter; Parzival is made to meet his pagan half brother, a king of India. Poetic necessity being thus satisfied, nothing remains but to have Cundrie, the Grail-maiden, conduct the brothers to Munsalvæsche, where Parzival is at last able to put the required question, and is recognized with joy as the destined healer of the sick Anfortas, whose successor he becomes. The conclusion requires an introduction; provision must be made for bringing on the scene this half brother. Accordingly, in a first book (to employ, for the sake of convenience, such modern division), the poet makes Gahmuret, as servant of the caliph (the Baruch in Wolfram's nomenclature), meet a heathen queen, with whom he has a temporary alliance, and who bears him a son, of color checkered between white and black. Deserting Belakane, Gahmuret proceeds to Waleis (Wolfram's transliteration of Gales, Wales, a country which to him was in the air), where he marries Herzeloyde, and himself ultimately falls in the cause of the caliph, leaving the widow to bring up her son Parzival, whom she endeavors to keep from knowledge of the chivalry which has cost her so dear.

In these ingenious additions, there appears to be nothing which need be supposed beyond the powers of Wolfram's own invention. The proper names, as seems to me, are quite enough to show that no French author had part in the composition, as indeed the entire action seems eminently characteristic of a German poet.

The portion of the poem which answers to Crestien's work exhibits several of those features noted as characteristic of later narratives. The persons are brought into relation by a complicated genealogical system; the parts of the action are carefully interwoven. Romantic episodes are introduced; thus Crestien introduces a lady who is mourning over her slain lover, and from whom the hero learns the mistake which he has made in failing to put the required inquiry; pleased with the situation, at a later time Wolfram shows us this damsel in the character of a nun of love, and at last exhibits a glimpse of her person as laid in death beside her lover. The Frenchman represents his youthful hero as listening with pleasure to the singing of birds in the forest; the German romantically represents the ambition of the childish Parzival as awakened by these songs. In the French, the mother counsels her departing son to observe the main rules of chivalry, to serve ladies, obey elders, and adore God. With the minnesinger, the advice becomes more extravagant; cautioned to avoid the attempt to ford streams which are not clear, the youth, literally obedient, keeps on one side of a runlet. The honor of wedded love is expressed in the

elevation of the heroine to the rank of wife, under the symbolic name of Condwiramurs. Misinterpretation plays a considerable part ; as already remarked, errors in the understanding of pronouns cause the maimed relation whom Perceval was bound to believe to be converted from a cousin to an uncle, while a like error causes the youth to be represented as learning his name from his cousin, instead of communicating it to her. In these cases it is evident that the writer has reflected on the French text ; and in the biography, with an exception presently to be noted, there is no alteration of importance not capable of such explanation.

In spite of this obvious relation, the German poet tells a different story : in order to defend himself against the charge of erroneous translation, he affirms that he has derived his version of the tale, not from Crestien, but from a Provençal minstrel, a certain Kiot, composing in French. While in Anjou, the latter had obtained his information from an Arabic book written before the Christian era by a certain Flegetanis, who on his part had come to a knowledge of history in virtue of his astrological knowledge. It appears quite unnecessary to take such statement as serious, or as anything more than one of the inaccurate pretences regarding the sources of their narratives usually employed by mediæval authors.

If, however, in the biographical story, Wolfram has in general followed the trouvère, the case is quite different in regard to the portion of the poem relating to the Grail. It has been shown that in the work of Crestien the dish occupies a subordinate and indeed accidental position, while in the later French romances it becomes the centre of the action. Now in the poem of Wolfram we find a series of representations which correspond to these later compositions.

(1.) In the *Parzival*, as in the French prose romances, the Grail is made the symbol of a spiritual kingdom intended for the hero of the story. (2.) It is defined as the essence of all that is desirable, as that which grants the fulfilment of human wishes ; corresponding is the definition of Robert de Boron. (3.) It is kept in a temple attached to the palace of Anfortas, the maimed relative whom the hero is to relieve ; just so, in the *Queste*, its place is in a chapel belonging to the palace of the Fisher King. (4.) In this temple, apparently, it remains on the altar as the centre of a daily service ; such is the description in the poem of Robert, where, as above set forth, it answers to the eucharistic chalice. (5.) It magically supplies the household with food ; so in the later French romancers, but not in Crestien. (6.) Each banqueter receives such fare as he may desire : an approach to this conception appears in the *Queste*, where the Grail is said to supply all that is desirable ; but in the French

work the underlying symbolism is apparent. (7.) The Grail has a curative property, and sufferers are kept alive by its influence. In the same manner, the insane Lancelot, in the French prose romance, recovers his sanity from the Grail; and in the *Queste* we read how a sick knight is healed by its apparition. (8.) It is invisible to unbelievers. In the *Queste* the sinful Lancelot loses his sight in consequence of beholding the vessel, and in the *Pellesvaus* it refuses to appear to Lancelot. (9.) It gives oracles which guide the conduct of its votaries; these are furnished by letters of light visible on the rim of the Grail. In the *Joseph of Arimathæa*, also, the course of the servants of the Grail is guided by oracles which it furnishes, either by means of a voice from heaven, or letters brought from heaven by an angel. (10.) The service of the Grail requires celibacy; with Robert de Boron and the French prose romances, celibacy is a requisite to the highest excellence. That Wolfram excepts the king of the Grail is plainly an inconsistency of his own. (11.) The agreement extends to at least one name: Wolfram calls the castle *Munsalvæsche*, and the country *Terre de Salvæsche*; in the poem of Robert we read that the personages of the action are to meet in the vales of *Avaron* (read *Avalon*, that is to say, *Glastonbury*); this is described as a savage country: —

En la terre vers Occident  
Ki est sauvage durement  
Es vaus d'Avaron.

(12.) The author of the history translated by Kiot is said to be the astrologer *Flegetanis*. In the *Grand St. Graal*, among personages connected with the race of kings of the Grail is a queen *Flegetine* (or *Flegentine*); the resemblance may be accidental, or the sound may have caught the ear of Wolfram, and served as the basis of his name.

The correspondences pointed out, certainly, cannot be considered as the result of independent developments. On the other hand, the story of Wolfram offers features which seem a result of the reaction of his own fancy. Thus, like the prose *Galahad* romances, he names a series of kings of the Grail; but not only the names differ, but also the country: Wolfram makes these sovereigns belong to the race of *Anjou*; in the choice of this province, he was doubtless influenced by the fame of the *Plantagenets*. So, as already noted, he makes the servants of the Grail constitute an order of *Templars*, who with the lance defend against intruders the passes of their country. These are dispatched to relieve lands in a state of anarchy, while the damsels, also by the divine mandate chosen from many lands, supply wives for the kings of the earth. The exigencies of the poet's plot, and also his high estimate of wedlock, induce him to relax the rules of the order in favor of its sovereign.

More remarkable is Wolfram's ignorance as to the nature of the Grail itself. As already shown, French romances waver between identification with the chalice of the Last Supper and the dish of the Paschal lamb. Wolfram has no idea that the Grail is a vessel of any sort; he takes it to be simply a jewel, apparently flat in form, which derives its power from an oblate deposited on Good Friday by a dove from heaven. This gem, originally in charge of the rebel angels, had been finally committed to kings of Anjou. Had Wolfram known of the Grail as a sacred dish, it would seem unlikely that he should have omitted that feature.

Wolfram identifies the Grail with the precious stone against which the phoenix rubs itself, and by the heat of which it is consumed; the name of the jewel, he says, was *lapsit* (i. e. *lapis*) *exillis*. This heat-producing stone is mentioned in the Grand St. Graal (but the bird is called Serpilon, evidently only a name of the phoenix); the gem is named *pirastite* (or *piratiste*). Wolfram must have had in mind some such appellation, and his corruption leaves no longer recognizable the original significance of the name. In the French romance, the introduction of the bird is symbolic, the phoenix being from patristic times the type of Christ; but there is nothing to show that the German poet intended to convey any mystic conception.

The correspondences pointed out allow only one conclusion: Wolfram must have received information, very likely of a piecemeal and inadequate character, concerning contemporary French romances dealing with the history of the Grail; the ideas thus obtained he treated with free imagination, and introduced as much as he saw fit into the framework of Crestien's narrative. In this manner the minnesinger was able to produce a composition as immortal as the story of which it is essentially an interpretation. As I have elsewhere remarked, the difference between the style and spirit of the two works is to be explained, not as a token of the superiority of the German poet, but rather as "the contrast in taste of a generation consciously romantic to that of a more epic predecessor: Crestien describes education in chivalry, of which the essential duties are charity and piety; Wolfram enlarges, but also blurs, the outlines of the action in favor of a presentation typically human."

#### HEINRICH VOM TÜRLIN.

About 1220, that is to say, somewhat more than a decade after Wolfram, an admirer and imitator of the latter, Heinrich of the Türlin, composed a poem of thirty thousand lines, reciting adventures of Gawein (Gawain). The fantastic character of the work illustrates the tendency of German romance, inclining to greater and greater extravagance. Heinrich was acquainted with the Perceval of Cres-

tien and its first continuation; in addition, he used other French Arthurian compositions, among these "Mule sans frein," "Lai du Corn," and "Lai du Mantel" (or variants of the extant lays). From this material, together with reminiscences of classical mythology, German folk-lore, and an abundant employment of free fancy, Heinrich produced an independent poem, called by him the Krone, which he pretended to have rendered from a French original; the tale he supplied with an outfit of proper names, in great measure of his own invention.

In the long narrative, the concluding and principal exploit is the discovery of the Grail. For the history, suggestions were contributed by the narrative of Crestien, abundantly altered and interpolated. In order to weave together the parts of his rambling and incoherent story, he followed a frequent practice of recasters by bringing the chief characters into relations of kinship. Thus, in the earlier portion of the tale, the hero is made to enter into a permanent love relation with a certain Amurfina (the hint for whose personality is taken from the story of "Mule sans frein"); having occasion to introduce the enchanter who, in Crestien's account, constructs the castle of Igerna (called by Wolfram Clinschor). Heinrich represents him as a priest and magician, uncle of Amurfina, named Gansguoter, who, after the death of Uter Pandragon, has bespelled Igern (Igerna), King Arthur's mother, by his playing on the viol, and built for her a castle. It is while undergoing an attack in a hostile castle (the Cavalon of Crestien) that Gawain is laid under obligation to find the Grail, or return within a year (the author is careful not to lay himself under the necessity of making his hero revisit the spot, as in the French tale he is bound to do); in this manner is introduced a quest of the Grail, which occupies the final part of the narration. The writer sees fit to complicate his inconsequent fiction by requiring the seeker of the Grail to carry certain amulets, namely, a ring given Arthur by Vrou Saelde (a German replica of the Latin Fortuna), the gem of a girdle granting invincibility, and magic gloves; these requirements give opportunity for long episodes, are stolen, and recovered with the aid of the benevolent Gansguoter. In the course of adventures, the hero reaches the abode of an unnamed sister of Gansguoter (and consequently aunt of Amurfina), qualified as a goddess, from whom he receives directions in regard to his behavior when he shall arrive in the castle of the Grail; he is to avoid somnolence, and to ask a question concerning the Grail. Gawain, now accompanied by Lanzelet (Lancelot) and Calocreat (the Calogrenant of Crestien, Colgrevance of Malory), is presently conducted to the hall of his quest, where he is welcomed by an old man lying on a couch, who

offers a seat at his side, and listens to his guest's recital of experiences. The meal is served, and the hall crowded with knights, ladies, and attendants; at the banquet a lady and knight sit side by side. A youth brings in a sword, which he lays before the host; cup-bearers offer wine, which Gawain declines. After sewers with dishes, a procession enters; two maids with candles are followed by two varlets bearing a spear; two other maids bring a golden plate; another, what seems to be a knife; while the last of the train, who wears a crown, carries a reliquary of gold and precious stones; Gawain, looking at her face, recognizes the sister of Gansguoter, the same who had directed him as to his duty. The spear exudes drops of blood, which fall into the plate above which it has been placed. The pix is set on the table, and, when the lid is removed, appears to contain bread (presumably an oblate), of which a portion is eaten by the host. Gawain's companions have fallen asleep, but he himself remains awake, and puts the question, asking in God's name what the wonders signify. At the word arises a shout of joy; Gawain is informed that he has accomplished the adventure in which Parzival has failed, and set at liberty the inmates of the castle, living and dead; for it now appears that only the ladies are alive, the host and his male company being no better than ghosts, who by grace of God are once a year allowed this repast. Concerning the Grail, Gawain is told that it is allowable to tell no more, and receives as a present the sword. The host and his retinue, together with the Grail, vanish, and Gawain is left with the ladies. Gawain and Lancelot bid adieu, on their way find Kay, and after half a year arrive at Karidol (Carlisle), where is held a splendid feast.

This remarkable tale constitutes a curious pendant to the poem of Wolfram, as an example of the manner in which a facile but commonplace novelist was capable of varying the theme, with the intent of constructing a popular fiction. The verse, equally wanting in poetic and psychologic merit, has interest only for scholars, and as giving an example of contemporary taste. As the story is obviously artificial, self-conscious, and in great measure the invention of the author, there is no reason to suppose that the variations of the history had any other source than in the good pleasure of Heinrich himself. It is, therefore, to be considered as merely a turn of his own imagination, that the Grail is conceived as a pix instead of as a dish; that the master of the castle takes the place of his father as the person nourished from the sacred vessel; and that by a wild flight of fantasy the same personage is described as an uneasy spirit compelled to forego the rest of the grave, until set free by the successful achiever of the quest. For the rest, the

manner in which the poet weaves together the independent sections of the tale is a sort of forecast of the way in which Wagner finally chose to do so.

#### THE LATER TITUREL.

To a certain Albrecht of Scharfenburg, composing in the latter part of the thirteenth century, belongs the discredit of leaving one of the most unreadable productions known to literature. As an imitator of Wolfram of Eschenbach, he appropriated all the worst features of the minnesinger's style, together with intolerable affectations of his own. His imagination was adequate to add new features to the conception of the Grail; this he described as a jewel, after the manner of Wolfram, but also as wrought into the shape of a vessel, used by Joseph of Arimathæa; an allusion showing his acquaintance with that romance, or its offshoots.

#### PEREDUR.

The story received treatment also in Wales; a tale of Peredur, son of Evrawc, is contained in the Red Book of Hergest, a collection written in the latter part of the fourteenth century. The problem of the relation of this story to the French of Crestien derives interest from the common hypothesis that the history, like other Arthurian narratives, was ultimately of Celtic origin. The question must be answered chiefly from a comparison of the outline of the plots. In the following abstract, intended to elucidate this connection, numerals are used to indicate sections of the tale correspondent to the French, and letters to show those which are original with the Welsh author. Minor additions of the Welshman are indicated by brackets.

A. A brief introduction narrates that Evrawc, earl of the North (that is, North Britain), with six sons, is slain in combats of chivalry. The widow, in order to keep her remaining child from knowledge of arms, with an unwarlike company retires to the desert, where the boy is brought up in ignorance of knightly weapons, but acquires skill in throwing sharpened staves. His character is marked by extreme simplicity; on one occasion, he mistakes hornless deer for goats, and, to the wonder of beholders, by speed of foot drives them to the goat-house.

I. The narration closely follows the outlines of Crestien's tale. Peredur meets in the forest knights, whom his mother declares are angels. He inquires the use of their arms, and resolves to become a knight; his mother, informed of his purpose, grieves, but finally consents, and gives him counsels; he plunges into the wood, and in a tent finds a lady, whom he kisses, from whom he takes a ring, and

by whose lover he is pursued; he rudely rides into the court, is recognized as the flower of chivalry by a dwarf and a maiden (here also a dwarf), who are therefore assaulted by Kei; he kills a knight who, has stolen a cup from Arthur, and dons the armor, with the aid of a member of the household (here Owain), by whom he sends back the cup, but declines to return to court until he has avenged the insult committed to those under his protection. (Within a week he overthrows sixteen knights, and sends them to court with the same message.) He reaches the house of a teacher (here an uncle), by whom he is knighted, with an injunction to put no questions concerning the remarkable things he may behold; he reaches another castle (of a second uncle), where he sees carried through the hall a bleeding spear and a salver (containing a man's head). He departs, and encounters in the wood, mourning over the body of a slain lover, a lady (his foster-sister), from whom he learns that he has been the cause of his own mother's death. (He compels the slayer to marry the bereaved lady, and sends the couple to Arthur's court; the king determines to go in search of Peredur.) He comes to the castle of a beleaguered damsels, who visits him at night to implore protection, and whom he succors by successively overthrowing the officers of the assailant, and that enemy himself. (Nothing is said of a love affair.) He meets the knight of the tent, defeats him, and reconciles him to the lady whose ring he has taken.

B. He vanquishes one of the cannibal witches of Gloucester, and visits the home of the witches, by whom he is taught chivalry and supplied with arms.

II. The narrative continues in close parallelism to the French tale, narrating how Peredur approaches the camp of Arthur, who, as above noted, is in search of him; how, at the sight of blood-drops on snow, he falls into a love reverie; in this state he overthrows Kei, but is gently accosted by Gwalchmei (Gawain), and conducted into the presence of the king and queen.

C. Independent episodes recite the love adventures of Peredur while at Arthur's court. On the day of his arrival, forgetful of the lady whose beauty he had remembered in his muse, at first sight he falls in love with Angharad of the Golden Hand, and makes a vow never to speak until she shall bestow on him her favor. He accomplishes feats of valor, conquering giants and slaying a serpent; he becomes so wasted by sorrow that he is changed past recognition, and at court goes by the name of the Dumb Youth, who distinguishes himself in joust. Angharad relents, and Peredur discloses his identity; but after this success, the lady suddenly disappears from the action.

D. A long chapter deals with a new love affair. While Peredur

is in search of the gold-producing stone to be found in the tail of a serpent, respecting which he has received information from a malevolent personage called the Black Oppressor, he has occasion to destroy an Addanc, or water-monster, in which he is aided by a mysterious lady who appears to him on a mound, and bestows another stone, which has the property of conferring invisibility, on condition of love service. Thus assisted, he kills the serpent and gets the auriferous stone, which, however, together with the hand of a lady deserved by feats of arms, he bestows on a follower. He wanders to a place where is in progress a tournament, of which the prize is the hand of the Empress of Constantinople, a beauty of whom he forthwith becomes enamored, and who turns out to be the very person to whom he had sworn allegiance; during fourteen years he lives with the empress, who imitates the example of her predecessor in a sudden and permanent retirement from the scene.

III. We now have a continuation of the tale as in *Crestien*, — the denunciation before Arthur by the ugly maiden, who reproaches Peredur for his neglect to put the question which would have restored his uncle, the lame king; the announcement of various adventures to be performed by Arthur's knights, and the accusation of murder brought against Gwalchmei; the journey of the latter; the attack of the commons on the visitor; his defence with a chessboard-shield; his succor by the daughter of his feudal enemy, and release on the promise to return in a year: the writer assures us that his source was silent concerning the conclusion of this adventure. On Good Friday he comes to a hermit, who rebukes him for wearing arms on that day, and with whom he spends Easter (the hermit directs him to a palace where he may obtain information as to the Castle of Wonders (*i. e.* that of the Lame King, in which was kept the bleeding lance).

E. A brief episode describes how Peredur becomes a prisoner, and is assisted by the daughter of his jailer to appear incognito in a tournament, where he obtains distinction.

IV. The adventures of Peredur now follow the lines of *Crestien*'s second continuator: we read of the castle of the self-playing chessmen, belonging to a lady called an empress; the quest of the head of a stag; the loan of a hound for this purpose; the theft of this dog, and the encounter with the knight of a tomb, who disappears; the adventure is uncompleted, and the lady of the chessboard, like her predecessors, drops out of the action.

F. The tale is cut short by a brief conclusion. Peredur a second time reaches the Castle of Wonders, where he finds Gwalchmei, and takes his seat beside his maimed relative (nothing is said of the question). It turns out that the bleeding lance was the weapon

with which the witches of Gloucester had slain the cousin whose head he had seen on the platter; the same enemies had also maimed his uncle. On the hero, therefore, devolves the duty of blood-vengeance, accomplished with the aid of Arthur. It is further explained that the various enemies encountered by Peredur, including the black maiden who had denounced him, were in reality the transformations of a cousin (who, as is implied, had thus acted the part of a benevolent fairy desirous to move the youth to perform his duty as avenger).

The sketch now given shows that the story consists of the plot of Crestien and his continuator as the groundwork into which is injected unrelated matter. According to an observation above made, such process of intercalation is an invariable mark of the expansion of a narrative.

The inference thence arising is converted into certainty by the consideration that the work throughout contains numerous and long verbal renderings from the French poem. Mistranslations occur; in several places it is obvious that the Welshman had in mind the longer and clearer French original, which his abbreviation has confused.

As to the names of the principal characters, the writer merely followed the usual Welsh practice in assigning to personages presumed to be of British origin appellations suitably British in sound. This process is naively illustrated by the remarks of the Welsh translator of the *Pellesvaus*: "And let the readers of this book excuse me for not being able to find Welsh names for the French ones, or for putting them as I am able; but this I know, that the name of the warrior that is commended here in French is Penefressvo Galeif, which is equivalent in Welsh to Peredur."

As for the interpolated matter, the greater part consists of chivalric fancies quite out of the line of old Welsh saga, while some portion is genuinely ancient. Thus the idea that the obstacles encountering the hero may turn out to be the creation of benevolently disposed fairies, or other supernatural personages, is a feature frequently appearing in Irish literature and folk-lore. But as these features are obviously insertions of the Welsh author, the origin of such additions is a question perfectly irrelevant to the present issue.

The language, costume, and character of the tale belong to Welsh romantic literature of the fourteenth century, penetrated as that literature was with the spirit of French romance. The treatment exhibits that increasing extravagance already noted as belonging to the later taste. The advice of the mother to seize food, steal jewels, and court a woman against her will, is merely a travesty of the

tender and truthful passage of the French poet. By an inconsistency, the teacher who knights Peredur is made to give instruction only in cudgel-playing (the idea is borrowed from a line of Crestien, who makes Perceval say that he has been used to play single-stick with cowboys). Having thus acquired one third of his force, in a visit to a second uncle (his maimed relative), Peredur learns the use of the sword, and acquires a second third of his strength ; it seems to me obvious that the narration of the trouvère is mangled, with the intent of assimilating the plot to that of folk-tales familiar to uninstructed readers.

In contrast to the petrification of the story is the introduction of romantic traits belonging to the fourteenth rather than the twelfth century. Thus Peredur, instead of tearing away the ring obtained from the maiden of the tent, is made to kneel and humbly represent, "My mother told me, wheresoever I saw a fair jewel to take it." Where, in this scene is the roughness of the savage youth armed with a wooden fork, with which he is absurdly depicted as killing an armed knight? The effort on the one hand to be decent, on the other to appear primitive, has worked havoc with the psychology of the tale.

The conclusion is, that in the Welsh story we have an example of the manner in which a later and foreign author may alter a refined composition into a set of extravagant and meaningless adventures.

As for the Grail, the recaster may be excused for the omission of a feature concerning which he doubtless had no more distinct idea than had the Norse translator of the *Perceval*.

#### SIR PERCEVELLE.

In English verse of the fourteenth century, the story of Perceval received a treatment which differs from that last noticed, inasmuch as the recast was no literary production, deliberately created by a self-conscious artist writing pen in hand, but the work of some unlettered minstrel, who produced his tale for recitation, and who may probably have obtained his material from the oral relation of imperfectly instructed informants.

I. A knight named Percevelle obtains the hand of Arthur's sister, Acheflour ; in a tournament held at the christening of his son, also named Percvelle, he is slain by the Red Knight. The widow, desirous to keep her son from knowledge of warfare, retires to the desert with one maiden and a troop of goats. She carries also a throwing-spear for the use of the boy, who becomes expert in its use. His mother having bidden him to worship God, he employs his time in seeking his unknown benefactor.

II. The story proceeds according to the plot of Crestien. Per-

cevelle learns from knights, whom he takes for gods, that he may obtain knighthood from Arthur. His mother, grieved at first, consents, and gives him counsels, namely, to be "of measure" (to be reasonable), and to greet a knight, whom he is to know by the minever in his dress. Percevelle finds a maid, whom he kisses, and with whom he changes rings; in order to be "of measure," he measures out the food he finds. He rides rudely into the hall of Arthur, who perceives the family likeness; he slays with his dart the Red Knight, who has stolen a cup from the king's board (thus unconsciously avenging his father). Being unable to strip the corpse, he is assisted by one of the household (here Gawain), and sends back the cup, but refuses to return to court.

III. He meets the mother of the Red Knight, a witch, who mistakes the youth for her son, whose wounds she declares her ability to heal; Percevelle casts her into the fire he had kindled.

IV. He sees a horseman dressed in minever, whom he therefore, according to his mother's advice, desires to greet; but this rider, recognizing only the arms of the Red Knight, flies, until Percevelle overtakes him, and informs him of the death of the latter.

V. While the hero is at the house of this (unrecognized) uncle, a messenger arrives from the Maiden's Land, desiring aid for Queen Lufamour, who is besieged by the sultan Gollerotherame. Percevelle resorts thither, and defeats the men of the oppressor. King Arthur comes up, and Gawain and Percevelle engage in an encounter, ended by the former recognizing "the fool of the field." In a single combat, the hero slays the sultan. In this engagement we have a curious trait: the simple youth, who is still ignorant of the use of the sword, does not know how to kill his overthrown antagonist, until Gawain bids him dismount from his horse; as Percevelle has hitherto heard these animals described only as mares, he is puzzled, and falls into an untimely philological reverie, which comes near being fatal. His steed swerves and saves him, the sultan is killed, and Percevelle weds Lufamour.

VI. After a year, Percevelle thinks it necessary to go in search of his mother. In the wood he meets the lady with whom he had changed rings, and reconciles her to her incensed lover, the Black Knight, an old enemy of his father: he returns the stolen ring, and wishes to obtain once more that given in exchange, his mother's present, but the latter has passed into the hands of a giant, whom Percevelle kills; he learns from the porter that the giant had been a suitor of his mother, who had become distraught at the sight of her son's ring as a probable evidence of Percevelle's death. He therefore resumes his goatskin dress and resorts to the forest, where he is able to find his mother, whom he restores by a magic draught.

The two then return to the Maiden's Land, and Percevelle lives happily with Lufamour until he departs to the Holy Land, where he ends his days.

This curious example of a popular rhymed novelle of the fourteenth century assuredly can boast no more remote antiquity. The love story may very well be explained as made up under the influence of suggestions indirectly obtained from the extant French poem, and the style and proper names correspond to such supposition. A lingering remnant of the portion of Crestien's story, relating to the unasked question, may be found in the untimely reverie of the hero. That the knight of the cup should be represented as the slayer of Percevelle's father is entirely in the manner of a reconstructor; that the vengeance is unintentional, and even unknown, shows that the feature is not ancient.

A considerable number of verbal coincidences attest the connection with the French verse, which is further made clear by the proper name of the hero, Sir Percevelle le Galayse.

The incidents of the German, Welsh, and English versions of the story, where they vary from the tale of Crestien, also disagree with each other; such aberration, according to the remarks above offered, is a plain indication that the changes must be considered as due only to the fancy of the several recasters. Minor agreements between traits of the English poem and those, for example, mentioned by Wolfram, are to be disregarded, being in every case explicable as due to a common interpretation of the data of the French original.

The assumption of an early Anglo-Norman romance as the presumed source of the English verse (suggested by G. Paris) ought not to be considered so long as the production can be explained as a variation founded on a *vera causa*, on the celebrated and easily accessible work of Crestien. The outlines of the latter composition might easily, in the fourteenth century, come into the knowledge of a popular poet.

#### NOTES.

*Parceval's saga.* The saga is edited by E. Kölbing, *Riddarasögur*, 1872. The Norseman spells *grual* as *braull*, and defines it as *textus*, again explained as *ganganda greiða*. The dictionary defines *greiða* as comb. It is impossible to guess just what the renderer meant, or how he got his idea.

*Parzival.* In the abundant literature of Wolfram's poem, I have not met with the explanation of sources above given, and which seems to be indicated by the correspondences to Robert de Boron and his successors. As to Wolfram's notion of the *Graal*, compare his definition, as the wish of Paradise (v. 351), or the abundance of earthly desire (v. 354), with the lines of Robert, where it is said to be the accomplishment of man's wish, *La douceur l'accomplissement—De leur cuers tout entierement* (2565, 2566; see, also, 3042, 3043), and his derivation from *agrément*.

*Crone.* The work of Heinrich vom Türlin is edited by H. T. Scholl, Stuttgart, 1852. Of the portion relating to the Grail, an abstract is given by Nutt.

*Titurel.* Edited by K. A. Hahn, 1842. (For the Grail, see stanza 6172 ff.)

*Peredur.* See the treatises of A. Nutt and of W. Golther. As an example of mistranslation on the part of the Welsh writer may be mentioned that of the advice given to Perceval by his mother, to be constant in praying to Our Lord in church: *Sor toutes riens vos voel proter — Que à glises et à moustier — Alés proter Nostre Segnor* (Potvin, 1761–1763). The Welshman renders: *lle y gwelych eglwys, kan dy pader urthi* (where thou seest a church, sing thy pater at it). Crestien makes Perceval see the red and white of his lady's complexion in the blood-stained snow; the Welshman adds black (following, no doubt, a situation of folk-tales) by introducing a raven as type of her black hair; for this feature he made preparation at an earlier point by noting the red spots on the cheek, and the jet-black hair. But in his passage relating the reverie, translations from the French are numerous and literal; it is therefore evident that he set out deliberately, pen in hand, to improve his source. He attributes lameness to Peredur's teacher; afterwards we find this characteristic assigned to another personage, the uncle in whose house is seen the bleeding spear (the Fisher King of Crestien). Again, he identifies the castle of the lady who owns the self-playing chessmen with the Castle of Wonders, but presently corrects himself by noting the latter as the mansion of the maimed king. I should regard these slips as the work of an author who wrote *currente calamo*, and did not revise. He thinks it necessary to provide the stag whose head the hero is required to obtain with a single unicorn-like horn as long as a lance, with which he slays all the beasts he meets. The addition belongs to the usual extravagance of the recaster. The member of Arthur's household who aids Peredur in putting on the arms of the slain knight, in Crestien, is Yonet, page of Gawain; in the Peredur, it is Owain, an evident misunderstanding, being an example of the process above mentioned by which a well-known personage is substituted for an obscure one. Wolfram falls into the same mistake. In the Percevelle, the aider is Gawain. Just so the Welsh tale makes Gwalchmei and Owain figure among the knights met by the youth in the forest, while the English poem introduces Ewain, Gawain, and Kay. That the Welshman makes the teacher of Peredur an uncle is, according to the general principle, already remarked, of connecting the tale by family alliances; so, again, in the English verse, where the agreement is once more in virtue of a principle of evolution common to recasts. As the outlines of the plot altogether vary, it is clear that no attention is due to such minor agreements, explicable on usual logical rules of development. In the language, costume, and scenery there is nothing to indicate for the Welsh work a date much earlier than the MS. assigned to about 1380.

*Sir Percevelle.* For examples of correspondences to Crestien, see the work of W. Golther, above cited. In the English poem the name of the hero is spelt Syr Percevelle the Galayse (1643), Sir Percevelle de Galays (1990). The subscription has Syr Perceval de Gales, which led the editor to the name Sir Perceval of Galles. It does not appear that the poet had any definite idea about the adjective; just as did Wolfram, he only transliterated Perceval li galois. That neither comprehended the epithet *galois* is only one of the instances of misinterpretation which show the priority of Crestien.

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